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Dear Parents and Carers,

You may be aware that yesterday the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, announced that students would not be sitting their GCSE exams in the summer and confirmed that teacher-assessed grades would be used to decide students' final GCSE grades.

With this in mind, I would like to clarify what this means in regard to your child's education and share with you our expectations of their engagement in remote learning and how they must play their part in ensuring that they secure the best possible GCSE grade outcomes.

Despite the cancellation of all summer exams, students **must** continue with their education and complete their learning and courses of study. We should be reminded that examinations are the assessment of learning and education, and not the learning and education itself, therefore the next few months of school remains to be crucial for every student. At this present time, this means that all students must continue to follow their school timetable and access all of their lessons online via Microsoft Office 365: Teams. Attendance to lessons and engagement in lessons will contribute significantly to students' learning and overall progress, therefore it is imperative that our students remain focused and committed to their studies, even at this challenging time.

Students were due to begin their second series of mock examinations in the week commencing Monday 22nd February. Due to our current school closure, we have postponed these mocks. Instead, these mock examinations will be replaced by final end of course assessments to be scheduled after Easter and at the end of our Year 11 students' academic year (date to be confirmed). These final assessments will allow students to demonstrate their learning and progress in each of their courses as they would have done in the summer exam series and provide students with the same closure they would have had from a formal assessment.

Details on how these final assessments will be conducted will follow shortly but they will be conducted in a safe and fair way for all students to allow every child to demonstrate their best. These assessments will also provide our staff with additional evidence to evaluate students' overall learning and therefore play a key role in contributing to students' overall final grades alongside students' performance in their prior learning, assessment and mock examinations.

In regard to Vocational subjects, we were notified yesterday that exams which were due to take place in January and February will proceed. Therefore, the following exams will still take place in the Academy for students who take these courses:

- Child Development - Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January at 9am
- Promotion and Finance for Enterprise - Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February at 1pm
- Health and Wellbeing - Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February at 1pm

Please see the Academy Website for further details.



Finally, I would like to thank you all for your ongoing support during these challenging times, particularly regarding our Y11 students. It will have been a very difficult time for them, awaiting information about how the pandemic has altered the course of their education and the impact that this might have on them. However, now we finally have the information, we can work with it and put plans in place to ensure that our students' education remains to be the priority and their pathways into further education are not affected. Between us all as educators, as parents and as carers, we will support our children through this and continue to expect their engagement and hard work in their studies so that they do themselves proud and respond positively to the opportunity they have been given to demonstrate their learning to us, their teachers.

Students must now regroup, reflect and begin completing their final months of education; completing the learning required to equip them for their next stages of education, be that 6<sup>th</sup> form, college or in an apprenticeship, and most importantly, to equip them to thrive as young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N Holder